

Yankee Camels. Ostriches hatched from U.S. Eggs

Ostriches
as a
Coney Island
Side Show.

THEY are going to have a flock of ostriches at Coney Island, and they will probably be advertised as the fleet-footed bird of the South African desert.

They are going to be trained to haul children in chariots like Angora goats, and the public will be admitted to see them swallow things. When an ostrich swallows anything the process is something like the passage of a ball of large calibre through a rubber hose. The bird gets its head over the tidbit somehow—anything from a cherry to a baseball will do—and a lump like half a dumbbell appears on the neck and slowly makes its way downward to the bird's body.

It seems like a wanton thing to destroy the faith inculcated by primers and first lessons in geography. The picture familiar to us all, a bare-legged Zulu, mounted on the back of a bird as tall as a camel, skimming over the desert and leaving pursuing horsemen away back on the edge of the picture, is really not true to life. An ostrich will support a boy in a side show, but actually his principal business is not that of a beast of burden. As a matter of fact, the ostrich's mission in life is very much the same as that of a sheep. He lives to be shorn. Twice a year the birds are driven into a box and their beautiful curling plumes are yanked out by rude, coarse farm hands for sale to the millinery trade.

The ostrich has no more right to a place of honor in the menagerie or side show than the heaviest sheep that ever gave his coat of wool to support a tariff argument.

Another thing, the ostriches at Coney Island have no more right to work themselves off as characters in a story of African farm life than President McKinley has to pose as an Irishman.

The ancestors of these birds came from Africa several generations ago. We here in New York knew them. They came from Africa, via Buenos Ayres, in 1881, and were in Central Park for a while. They were bound for California.

On the Pacific they prospered yielding their tall feathers for theatre bonnets, giving pleasure thereby to thousands of women and diminishing the chances of salvation of millions of men. And now they have sent some of their gay progeny back to the East to run in opposition to the couched-couchee dancers, the merry-go-rounds and the other curious animals which make Sundays and holidays dreams of joy all Summer long.

Out in the West, where these birds come from, they run around the corals of the ostrich farm as common and free, if not as imposing a sight, as policemen on Broadway.

The establishment of ostrich raising as an American industry has done away with a whole lot of romantic tales we used to listen to in

school. They are not even born in California they are in story-book Africa. That lovely picture of an egg as big as a musk melon, attending to its own hatching in the hot sand, has never been duplicated in America. Here they grab the egg away from Mrs. Ostrich as soon as she lays it. With proper encouragement she will supply five dozen eggs every year. The laying is all she has to do with it.

A farm hand in overalls takes the eggs as fast as they are deposited and puts them in an incubator. An oil lamp or gas flame does the rest, and a few days after the little hen-like things break the shell they are put in a big slatted box, and for a period their life is as commonplace as any chicken's. Of course, they grow up as tame as barnyard fowl.

They first pluck the birds when they are nine months old, and this yield of feathers is only worth about \$5. But when they really get the growth, \$150 a year is not an extraordinary amount for an able-bodied ostrich to realize for his owner. Four-year-old birds are worth about \$1,000 a pair. They are not so quoted in the market, of course, but those are the figures that are given by some of the Government experts who have investigated the industry. After the first nine months they lose their tall and wing feathers to the pluckers every six months, and the difference

between a big, fluffy, proud, handsome cock ostrich before and after the plucking is pathetic.

The funny part about it is that Mr. Ostrich does not know that he looks any different, and the contrast between his dignity and hobbledness is immense. When the farmers pluck the birds they have to get them into a stall, so they can't kick. When an ostrich is feeling right and is not hampered he can make the record of the far-famed Government mule the laughing stock of the sporting world.

That other story of the ostrich hiding its head and thinking it cannot be seen has also failed of corroboration on American ostrich farms. When something happens to frighten the birds they dash off like a frightened trolley car until they come to a fence. When they slip the birds they do pull stockings on over their heads, but the ostrich is even then under no delusion concerning his visibility. Only being in the dark, he is doubtful of himself, and neither kicks nor rumples his plumage. Even at Coney Island the ostriches, of course, will be only a show. They are not down there for business, and visitors need not expect to be allowed to pluck tall feathers as souvenirs. But if the East is found to agree with the birds the near future is likely to see an ostrich farm in this vicinity, and then, when you are drawing up your plans and specifications for your Easter bonnet, you may be able to make your feather selections right where they grow.

FRAYIS



THE OSTRICH FARM at Pasadena.

Camels American-Bred On Uncle Sam's Land.

"WELL, by the great Gila monster!"
"Suffering vinegrons!"

"What is it?"
"Damfino! ghost of a goose that's stolen a graffe's body, maybel!"

"I knew something would happen when you dropped the demlohn. It doesn't do to stop drinking as sudden as that!"

The two prospectors who had strayed up Salt River were standing before their camp and staring at an apparition that was purring its hobling way through the mesquite.

The mesquite thicket was six feet high, and yet above it vibrated a snakelike head as big as a horse's, and behind it occasionally bobbed into view a yellow spot like the top of a sea serpent's first bend.

The prospectors got their Winchester. They were not going to be eaten by any unclassified monster of the Arizona wilds if they knew it.

Both covered that awful head, and when they could stand it no longer both blazed away. Down went the head. There was a tremendous thrashing in the underbrush that grew less and less, a rattling, curdling moan, and at last silence.

Cautiously the two men worked their way through the mesquite, their rifles at full cock, ready for anything desperate and deadly. At last they reached what they were looking for. A giant beast lay there dead. It was half as tall again as the biggest elk either of them had ever seen—a great, tall animal, with long legs and a long neck.

"Buck," said one of the prospectors solemnly, "we've murdered a divrye."

Sure enough, their game was a camel, and this in a spot hundreds of miles from any route a menagerie had ever passed. There was no trace of saddle or harness.

The prospectors could not make it out. They uncovered their heads, wiped the sweat from their faces, and went their way. Probably they are still wondering

how the naturalists failed to learn that there were wild camels in Arizona.

As a matter of fact, there are camels there, but they are the progeny of a small herd that belonged to the Government. They were not a successful experiment, so the Government turned them loose in the Salt River Valley, and there they roam, occasionally startling some uninitiated traveller or raising hob with some Mexican's ranch.

Uncle Sam has at various times had more queer live stock than any outsider would dream of. These queer beasts and birds were not in museums or shows, but were brought to America for plain utilitarian purposes. The Government owns a herd of reindeer in Alaska, and some sledge dogs in the same country. It has a choice collection of bugs, procured at great expense, to war on plant parasites.

Before the railroads had gridironed the West the Government had a great deal of trouble getting its supplies across the deserts to the remote posts. Mules died from the heat and the privations due to scarcity of grass and water, and their packs as often as not went to the Indians instead of to the soldiers. Then some giant bruiser connected with the War Department conceived the notion that camels from the Arabian deserts would be just the thing for this traffic. Major Wayne was ordered to make a report on the camel scheme.

After careful investigation he reported that an able-bodied camel could carry from three to six hundred pounds thirty miles a day, which no mule could do; that a swift riding camel could carry a man over fifty miles of desert in ten hours, which makes a horse something to laugh at, and that the hump-backed beasts could live on next to nothing, and do without water as long as Kentucky colicists.

So the Government got camels, and for a while the garrison got their supplies after the most approved Oriental fashion.

Nobody seems to know just why the plan was not a good one. In the War Department reports the experiment is simply described as unsuccessful. The Government had several bunches of camels on its hands and it simply turned them loose. One bunch was freed in Texas, another on the great plains and the third on Salt River.

Two of these bunches soon became extinct. The Texas Comanches learned by trial that camel was as good to eat as buffalo, and the Sioux on the plains were not far behind them in this discovery. Only in Arizona did the camels survive. Then there were comparatively few Indians, and long after Texas and the plains became farm land the Arizona country remained a wilderness. Some of the camels have been captured by showmen, others have been shot like the one that scared the pros-



pectors.
An old Mexican on Blue River found one devastating his tomato patch one morn-

ing and lanced him, and for years Old Ramon used to ride the ugly beast down the trail to St. John with his produce. He

also broke him to the plough, but the camel couldn't stand it, and died, and Ramon made alfornas of his hide.

THE DOWNFALL OF THE SAUSAGE IN CHICAGO.

It is announced that the details of the Luetgert murder case have driven smoked sausages out of favor as an edible in Chicago, and the trade in them is paralyzed. Butchers are no longer able to dispose of bolognas and similar forms of wurst, and even saloon frequenters leave them untouched on the free lunch counters.

Before Adolph L. Luetgert was accused of killing his wife and then destroying the remains with caustic soda in a vat used in the preparation of sausage filling a large trade was done in Chicago in various kinds of smoked sausage. These were much favored by German residents and formed an important item in the free lunchrooms set out in most of the \$800 saloons in this city. Luetgert's factory turned out a big share of this kind of food. His brands were popular and he was hard pushed to supply the demand. Now sausage of any kind is hard to sell, and the smoked sort can hardly be given away. The sight of them, so squeamish people assert, brings too strongly to mind the alleged tragedy in Luetgert's factory.

All sausage makers are seriously affected by the change in public taste. At least 6,000 saloons in Chicago made bologna the principal feature in free lunches, and in some of them as much as three or four pounds was served in this way daily. Conservative men estimate the amount of smoked sausage used in saloons in this city up to May 1 at 10,000 pounds a day. Since the developments in the Luetgert case this has dwindled away to nothing. A round of downtown resorts showed plates piled high with stale slices of sausage, while other eatables usually served in connection with it were cleaned out.

John J. Hackett, who owns a number of saloons in the outlying districts, where smoked sausage has been a favorite side dish, says he is not buying any more because his patrons will not touch it, and in common with other saloon men he has had to get rid of what he had on hand by giving it away to tramps.

"I first noticed the change in public taste about three weeks ago," said Mr. Hackett. "Before that it was difficult to keep the sausage plates supplied. All of a sudden people quit eating it, and upon inquiry I found other saloon men were troubled the same way. Finally I asked some customers

If there was anything wrong with the sausage and they told me it reminded them too strongly of Mrs. Luetgert's case. I don't set it out any more because it's no use."

Paddy Carroll, Frank Kennedy, John Early and a lot of other equally well-known saloon men, testify to the same state of affairs in other parts of the city. The anti-sausage habit has also spread to private houses, and the fresh pork variety is to a great extent tabooed. Butchers say the falling off in trade is much larger than those not thoroughly posted can be made to believe. Smoked sausage is kept out of sight, and wise tradesmen are wary about displaying even the fresh sort which formerly had prominent place in their shops. John Taylor, a West Side butcher, who has had a large trade in this particular line, said:

"I don't sell a pound of sausage now, where my trade up to May 5 amounted to hundreds of pounds. People don't eat it any more, and the mere sight of it on the block is enough to drive some women out of the shop. I didn't know people could be so squeamish, but it's a fact that they won't touch sausage since the newspapers printed that story about Luetgert killing his wife."



"The Government turned them loose in the Salt Lake Valley, and there they roam, occasionally startling some uninitiated traveller or raising hob with some Mexican's ranch."